

DEER HERD UNIT MANAGEMENT PLAN
Deer Herd Unit # 18
(Oquirrh-Stansbury)
April 2006

BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Salt Lake, Utah and Tooele counties - Boundary begins at the junction of I-15 and I-80; south on I-15 to SR-73; west on SR-73 to SR-36; south on SR-36 to the Pony Express road located just south of Faust; west on this road to the Skull Valley-Dugway-Timpie road; north on this road to I-80 at Rowley Junction; east on I-80 to I-15.

LAND OWNERSHIP

RANGE AREA AND APPROXIMATE OWNERSHIP

Ownership	YEARLONG RANGE		SUMMER RANGE		WINTER RANGE	
	Area (acres)	%	Area (acres)	%	Area (acres)	%
Forest Service	0	??	48386	28.8%	20269	7.2%
Bureau of Land Management	0	??	45,888	27.3%	88,076	31.3%
Utah State Institutional Trust Lands	0	??	5,727	3.4%	20319	7.2%
Native American Trust Lands	0	??	28	0%	28,777	10.2%
Private	0	??	64177	38.2%	108,703	38.6%
Department of Defense	0	??	3,969	2.4%	15,263	5.4%
Utah State Parks	0	??	0	0%	0	0%
Utah Division of Wildlife Resources	0	??	0	0%	0	0%
TOTAL	0	??	168175	100%	281407	100%

UNIT MANAGEMENT GOALS

Manage for a population of healthy animals capable of providing a broad range of recreational opportunities, including hunting and viewing. Balance deer herd impacts on human needs, such as private property rights, agricultural crops and local economies. Maintain the population at a level that is within the long term capability of the available habitat to support.

POPULATION MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

- < Target Winter Herd Size - Achieve a target population size of 10,600 wintering deer.

Unit 18

1994 – 2005 Objective	10,600
2006 – 2011 Objective	10,600
Change	0

5 year Winter Herd Size – Manage for a 5-year target population of 10,600 wintering deer during the five-year planning period unless range conditions become unsuitable, as evaluated by DWR permanent range trend surveys. If winter range is the limiting factor, reduce population objective by 20% on any unit when weighted DCI score falls in to “poor” classification or below. If winter range condition is classified as “fair” or better deer populations will be allowed to expand toward the long-term objective.

Deer winter range condition on Unit 18, Oquirrh-Stansbury, as indicated by DWR permanent range trend surveys.

Unit Oquirrh/Stansbury 18	DCI Score	Fair DCI range for unit 18	Classification	Current Population	Proposed Objective 2006-2011
2002 evaluation	47	38-54	Fair	9,400	10,600

- < Herd Composition Maintain a region-wide three year average postseason buck to doe ratio ranging from 15-20:100.
- < Harvest – General Buck Deer hunt regulations, using archery, Rifle, and Muzzleloader hunts apply on Oquirrh/Stansbury Unit 18.

POPULATION MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES**Monitoring**

- < Population Size - Utilizing harvest data, postseason and spring sex and age classifications and mortality estimates, a computer model has been developed to estimate winter population size.
- < Buck Age Structure - Monitor age class structure of the buck population through the use of checking stations, postseason classification, uniform harvest surveys and field bag checks.
- < Harvest - The primary means of monitoring harvest will be through the statewide uniform harvest survey. Achieve the target population size by use of antlerless harvest using a variety of harvest methods and seasons.

Limiting Factors (May prevent achieving management objectives)

- < Crop Depredation - Take all steps necessary to minimize depredation as prescribed by state law and DWR policy.
- < Hunter Access - Excessive habitat utilization will be addressed. Because of the large amount of private land on this unit, it's location and the number of owners, public access for deer hunting will continue to be a problem. Formation of the Heaston East CWMU may help in this regard on the North Oquirrh Mountains.

- < Habitat - At present, the availability of high quality summer range may be more limiting to this deer population than winter range. Range condition, however, of winter ranges is a long-term problem. Encroachment by juniper trees and the resultant loss of forage production, diversity and quality is very widespread. The problem is especially apparent on the Stansbury Mountains.
- < Predation - Refer to DWR predator management policy.
 - Assess need for control by predator species, geographic area and season of year.
 - Seek assistance from USDA/Wildlife Services when deer populations are depressed and where there is a reasonable chance of gaining some relief through a predator control effort. Predator control efforts will focus on reducing predator numbers immediately prior to and during the spring fawning period.
 - Recommend cougar harvest to benefit deer while maintaining the cougar as a valued resource in its own right.
- < Highway Mortality - Cooperate with the Utah Dept. Of Transportation in construction of highway fences, passage structures and warning signs etc.
- < Illegal Harvest - If illegal kill becomes an identified and significant source of mortality, attempt to develop specific preventive measures within the context of an action plan developed in cooperation with the Law Enforcement Section.

HABITAT MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

- < Provide a long-term continuing base of habitat quantity and quality sufficient to support the stated population objectives.

HABITAT MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

- < Work toward long-term habitat protection, preservation and improvement through the use of agreements with federal and local agencies and the use of Conservation Easements on private lands.
- < Continue to restore and improve sagebrush steppe habitats critical to deer according to DWR's Habitat Initiative. Cooperate with federal land management agencies and private landowners in carrying out habitat improvements such as reseeding, controlled burns, water developments etc. on public and private lands.
- < Continue to monitor the permanent range condition and trend studies located throughout the winter range.
- < Implement the Habitat Management Plan for the Carr Fork Wildlife Management and Reclamation Area as a means for improving winter range conditions on the west side of the Oquirrh Mountains.
- < Cooperate with federal land management agencies and private landowners in carrying out habitat improvements such as reseeding, controlled burns, water developments etc. on public and private lands.
- < Cooperate with federal land management agencies and local governments in developing and administering access management plans for the purposes of habitat protection and escape or security areas.

PERMANENT RANGE TREND SUMMARIES

Unit 18, Oquirrh-Stansbury 2002

There are 18 trend range sites on the Oquirrh range. Four of these sites are in critical winter range, seven on winter range, four on transitional winter / spring - fall range, and three on summer range. The most recent trend data was gathered on these sites during 2002. Summer range makes up about 48% of the area. Winter range comprises 48% of the area. During severe winters the available winter habitat is reduced in half. Another major concern is that 63% and 45% of the summer and winter range respectfully is under private ownership.

There are 11 trend range sites on the Stansbury mountain range. Summer range is limited to above 6800 ft contour where it makes up 45% of the range that is classified as suitable for big game. The remainder of the range is considered winter range (55%). The portion of private lands on this big game habitat is 6% and 14% of the summer and winter range respectively.

Overall soil, browse and herbaceous trends are stable to improving. Only three soil, one browse, and three herbaceous sites showed down or slightly down trends. Many sites showed a decline in forb species going from an average of 18 in 1997 to 12 in 2002.

Duration of Plan

This unit management plan was approved by the Wildlife Board on _____ and will be in effect for five years from that date, or until amended.